

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1-14 and 16 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 15 has been canceled and claim 16 is added. Claims 1-15 presently stand rejected.

Claims 4 and 12 are objected to because of informalities.

Claims 1-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the USB Specification in view of "USB Eases Data Acquisition," *Test & Measurement World*, May 1998 by Bassak.

For the reasons set forth below, Applicant respectfully traverses the objection and rejection and requests favorable disposition of the application.

Argument

In regard to the claim objection to claims 4 and 12, Applicant has amended claims 4 and 12 to provide for proper Markush group claiming format. Withdrawal of the objection to claims 4 and 12 is respectfully requested.

In regard to the prior art rejection, Applicant has amended the claims to further define over the prior art. In particular, Applicant submits that the prior art of record fails to teach or suggest the claimed integrated USB hubs within the respective control panels and the dedicated external USB hub that connects the control panels to the Control unit, as described, for example, at page 6, par. 18-19 of the specification. The structure as claimed is advantageous because a number of different control panels at different locations can be used for easily inputting data to a control unit because all of the control panels are connected to the control unit by a single connection, e.g., a single cable.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.114(c)
U.S. Appln. No. 10/055,989

At least for the above reason, Applicant respectfully submits that the present claims are patentable over the asserted prior art and the rejection to the claims should be withdrawn.

Patentability of New Claim

For additional claim coverage merited by the scope of the invention, Applicant has added new claim 16. Applicant submits that the prior art does not disclose, teach, or otherwise suggest the combination of features contained therein. For example, claim 16 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependence on claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the application is believed to be in form for immediate allowance with claims 1-14 and 16, and such action is hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, he is kindly requested to **contact the undersigned** at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



Kevin M. Barner
Registration No. 46,075

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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